

DATELINE #135 NEW YORK 3-4801
ROBERT L REDEEN/NY

DECEMBER 8, 1976

CONSERVATION CONSCIOUS CON EDISON
(VOICE PIECE AND INSERTS AVAILABLE IN TAPE LIBRARY)

ANNCR: DATELINE NEW YORK.....PICTURES IN SOUND, OF PEOPLE, PLACES AND EVENTS IN THE AMERICAN METROPOLIS. THE LOCAL POWER AND GAS COMPANY THAT SUPPLIES NEW YORKERS WITH THEIR ELECTRICITY THESE DAYS SPENDS A LOT OF TIME AND EFFORT URGING THEIR CUSTOMERS TO USE LESS. ROBERT L. REDEEN REPORTS.

NARR: IT ALL STARTED ON AN AUTUMN DAY ELEVEN YEARS AGO. JUST AS WORKERS WERE LEAVING THEIR OFFICES FOR THE EVENING THE ELECTRIC POWER FAILED. THE POWER FAILURE CAUGHT PEOPLE IN ELEVATORS IN TALL BUILDINGS AND OTHERS WERE TRAPPED IN SUBWAY TRAINS BENEATH CITY STREETS. WITHOUT TRANSPORTATION MANY WERE STRANDED IN THEIR OFFICES OVERNIGHT. THE GREAT BLACKOUT STILL LIVES IN PEOPLE'S MEMORIES IN NEW YORK. AND THE OFFICIALS OF CONSOLIDATED EDISON -- CON EDISON FOR SHORT -- HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN EITHER. ELECTRICAL USAGE THAT FATEFUL DAY HAD EXCEEDED THE PEAK DEMAND WHICH THEIR EQUIPMENT AND ELECTRICAL SUPPLIES COULD HANDLE. CON EDISON LAUNCHED A PROGRAM TO BUILD MORE ELECTRICAL GENERATING PLANTS, BUT THESE WERE RESISTED BY CITIZENS WHO DIDN'T WANT THE PLANTS -- ESPECIALLY NUCLEAR PLANTS -- IN THEIR NEIGHBORHOODS. THEN, CON EDISON, FIVE YEARS AGO, CONCEIVED ANOTHER IDEA: IF THE PEOPLE WON'T LET YOU INCREASE THE AVAILABLE WATTAGE, PERSUADE THEM TO REDUCE THE AMOUNTS THAT THEY USE -- PARTICULARLY DURING PEAK PERIODS. THE USUAL PEAKS CAME NOT IN AUTUMN WHEN THE

NARR: GREAT BLACKOUT HAD OCCURRED BUT DURING HOT SUMMER DAYS
(CONT) BETWEEN FOUR AND FIVE O'CLOCK IN THE AFTERNOON. CON EDISON
OFFICIAL ROBERT STEVENS SAYS THAT AIR CONDITIONERS ARE
THE BIGGEST ELECTRICITY USERS THEN.

TAPE: CUT ONE -- STEVENS

"WHAT WE URGE OUR CUSTOMERS TO DO IS TO KEEP AIR CONDITIONERS
OFF AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE, PARTICULARLY DURING OUR PEAK HOURS.
AND ALSO WHEN THEY BUY AIR CONDITIONERS TO LOOK FOR THE
HIGH EFFICIENCY UNITS. DON'T LOOK AT THE ORIGINAL PURCHASE
PRICE. YOU CAN BUY A RELATIVELY INEXPENSIVE AIR CONDITIONER
THAT WILL LITERALLY SWALLOW UP KILOWATT HOURS OF POWER
IN ORDER TO COOL AN AREA. WE URGE PEOPLE TO BUY THE HIGHLY
EFFICIENT UNITS. IT MAY COST SOMEWHAT MORE, MAYBE FIFTY
DOLLARS MORE, TO BUY THE ORIGINAL UNIT BUT THE OPERATING
COSTS ARE CONSIDERABLY LOWER AND THEY HAVE A LOWER IMPACT
ON THE CONSOLIDATED EDISON SYSTEM."

NARR: MR. STEVENS DOESN'T RECOMMEND ANY PARTICULAR BRANDS. BUT
HE DOES SUGGEST THAT CUSTOMERS CHECK THE EER RATING --
THE ENERGY EFFICIENCY RATING -- WHICH IS CARRIED BY EACH
AIR CONDITIONER. THE RATINGS ARE BY NUMBERS AND MR.
STEVENS URGES BUYERS TO CHOOSE THE HIGHER NUMBERS.
HE ALSO REFERS TO ANOTHER BIG USER OF ELECTRICITY.

TAPE: CUT TWO -- STEVENS

"ANY APPLIANCE THAT HAS A HEATING ELEMENT IN IT, SUCH AS
TOASTERS, IRONS, CLOTHES DRYERS, DISH WASHERS THAT HAVE A
HEATING ELEMENT THAT WILL SUPPLY EXTRA HEAT TO THE WATER
AND ALSO A DRYING CYCLE FOR THE DISHES. ALL OF THOSE
APPLIANCES ARE ENERGY-CONSUMING APPLIANCES AND WE URGE
IN THAT CASE THAT THESE PARTICULAR APPLIANCES WHERE AT ALL
PRACTICAL BE USED AFTER OUR PEAK. WE HAVE A SLOGAN. WE
SAY, 'PUT YOUR APPLIANCES ON THE NIGHT SHIFT.'"

NARR: CON EDISON HAS URGED MANUFACTURERS TO PUT EFFICIENCY
CONTROLS ON THEIR APPLIANCES. SUCH CONTROLS WOULD, FOR
EXAMPLE, DEFROST REFRIGERATORS ONLY WHEN NEEDED AND TURN
OFF A SUPPLEMENTAL HEATING ELEMENT THAT DRIES DISHES IN

NARR: THE DISHWASHERS IN JUST HALF AN HOUR. THE UTILITY COMPANY
(CONT) HAS SUGGESTED THAT ROOM TEMPERATURES IN HOMES BE KEPT AT
TWENTY DEGREES CENTIGRADE DURING THE DAY AND LOWER AT
NIGHT. THEY'VE POINTED OUT THAT WEARING WARMER CLOTHING
WOULD ALSO HELP. CON EDISON WANTS ITS CUSTOMERS TO SAVE
NATURAL GAS, TOO, AND HAS ARRANGED WITH INSULATION
CONTRACTORS TO SUBMIT BIDS TO THOSE CUSTOMERS WHO ASK
FOR THEM. A HOME THAT'S PROPERLY INSULATED, PARTICULARLY
IN THE ATTIC OR CEILING, CAN EXPECT TO SAVE ABOUT TWENTY-
FIVE PERCENT ON HEATING BILLS.

TAPE: CUT THREE -- STEVENS

"ENERGY, WHETHER IT BE GAS OR ELECTRIC, IS SOMETHING THAT
SHOULD BE GUARDED. IT SHOULD NOT BE WASTED AND OUR
CONSERVATION EFFORTS ARE GEARED WHOLLY AT HAVING PEOPLE
USE JUST THE AMOUNT OF ENERGY THEY NEED AND NOT TO WASTE
IT. ENERGY IS IN SHORT SUPPLY, NOT ONLY IN THE NEW YORK
AREA, THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY AND, I'M SURE, THROUGHOUT THE
WORLD."

NARR: ALL THESE IDEAS AND MORE HAVE BEEN HEAVILY PUBLICIZED BY
CON EDISON IN NEW YORK NEWSPAPERS, BUSES, SUBWAYS AND IN
LITTLE PAMPHLETS MAILED TO CUSTOMERS. AND HOW EFFECTIVE
HAS IT ALL BEEN, WE ASKED MR. STEVENS.

TAPE: CUT FOUR -- STEVENS

"YOU CAN'T ESTABLISH ITEM BY ITEM EXACTLY WHICH WERE THE
MOST EFFECTIVE. I THINK THE EFFECTIVE PART OF OUR CAMPAIGN
WAS CHANGING THE ATTITUDE OF OUR CUSTOMERS, GETTING THEM
TO HAVE A CONSERVATION ETHIC THAT, SURE YOU WOULD USE YOUR
APPLIANCES SPARINGLY BUT YOU'D ALSO TURN LIGHTS OUT IN YOUR
HOME. IF A ROOM WAS UNOCCUPIED YOU WOULDN'T HAVE LIGHTS
ON. IT WAS JUST OVER A PERIOD OF YEARS CONVINCING OUR
CUSTOMERS THAT IT'S IMPORTANT TO CONSERVE."

NARR: THE CUSTOMERS HAVE AN ADDITIONAL GOOD REASON TO CONSERVE THEIR USE OF ELECTRICITY AND GAS. CON EDISON HAS JUST ASKED THE STATE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION FOR ANOTHER BIG RATE RAISE.

ANNCR: THIS HAS BEEN DATELINE NEW YORK....PICTURES IN SOUND, OF PEOPLE, PLACES AND EVENTS IN THE AMERICAN METROPOLIS. JOIN US AGAIN NEXT WEEK (AT THIS TIME) FOR ANOTHER...DATELINE NEW YORK.

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